News from the Nurse…

Please make sure your children are properly attired for the outside temperatures. Have your children dress in layers that they can add or take off as needed. Hats and gloves should be worn also.

Colds

Winter is bringing inclement weather, and our homes often lack humidity! These afflictions are already evident in the school nurses' office as increased numbers of students are making their appearance. The following are some tips to help you better understand and cope with a cold:

- **Cold symptoms are caused by a virus and include one or more of the following: running or stopped-up nose, sore throat, dry cough, weakness, a general sick feeling, and sometimes aches and pains.**
- **Virus is the key word here. People often mistakenly believe that they should be taking an antibiotic to rid themselves of a cold. Antibiotics are not effective against a virus and when taken for a viral condition, antibiotics destroy the normal flora (bacteria) in the body. This leaves the individual more vulnerable to infection by other bacteria.**
- **A cold lasts from three to seven days and is usually full-blown after the first two or three days. Treatment is usually symptomatic, that is, it is given to make you feel better, but not to cure the cold.**

Home Treatment: Many colds require no treatment except to keep out of the cold weather and not become too tired.

1. **Activity: you may remain as active as your feelings allow.**
2. **Diet: eat a well-balanced diet. Try to drink more fluids than usual.**
3. **Medication: cold, cough, sore throat, and mild pain medications such as Tylenol are available from the BX and Commissary. These medications do not require your seeing a doctor.**
4. **Environment: avoid air which is dry. You can increase humidity or moisture in your room by placing a pan of water over the heater or using a commercial vaporizer.**
5. **Strength: get extra sleep and rest.**
6. **Patience: have plenty of it. Your cold will go away.**
7. **Smoking: stop since it will increase your discomfort and chances of getting bronchitis.**
8. **Comfort: if your throat feels dry or sore, gargle with salt water frequently (one-half teaspoon of salt in an 8-oz glass of water).**

When your child should see the doctor:

1. **If he/she has a temperature over 101 that persists for more than 48 hours.**
2. **If he/she has a cough that produces thick, yellow, green, or brown sputum.**
3. **If he/she has chest pain or shortness of breath.**
4. **If he/she develops an earache or pain in the teeth or facial sinuses.**

To prevent sharing your colds with others, REMEMBER: don't share eating and drinking utensils; do use tissues and dispose of them properly; and stay home when you find yourself coughing excessively or running an elevated temperature. GIVE YOURSELVES AND YOUR FRIENDS A BREAK! A day or so of rest from school or work may save several weeks at home. Remember to WASH YOUR HANDS!!!